



New Jersey Scout Museum

"All the news that fits"

Volume 2, Number 1 (October 2005)

New Jersey Historical Commission CAPES Grant Awarded to NJSM

The New Jersey Historical Commission has awarded a CAPES (Caucus Archival Projects Evaluation Service) grant to the New Jersey Scout Museum. This grant is sponsored the New Jersey caucus of MARAC, a professional organization for archivists. The grant covers the cost of having the museum's archival collection (including paper records, photographs, and scrapbooks) evaluated by a professional archivist. Fred Pachman was instrumental in helping us to obtain the grant, which was announced in early 2005.

Mrs. Elsalyn Palmisano visited the museum and spoke with us about how the museum got started and what we are currently doing to maintain our collection. She inspected the exhibit and storage areas. She then put together a detailed report with a number of recommendations for improvements to our facility and procedures. Some of the recommendations have already been implemented. An additional benefit of this evaluation is that it can be the first step towards applying for additional grants from the State to offset the cost of implementing the recommendations.

Museum Trustees Organized

Along with obvious tasks like developing the displays at the museum and inventorying donations, another critical aspect of getting the museum started is to formally charter our organization. With Jan Wouter's assistance, a Certificate of Incorporation was filed with the state. The Board of Trustees has begun meeting, and approved the museum Bylaws. The board is now working to obtain 501(c)(3) status with the IRS for beneficial tax treatment. The President is Steve Lang. The other trustees are: Matt Thornton, Jan Wouters, David Crow, David Wolverton, and John Bruns. Subsequently, Pat Kurz (a professional with the Monmouth Council of Girl Scouts) was also named as a trustee.

Monmouth Council's First Eagle Scout

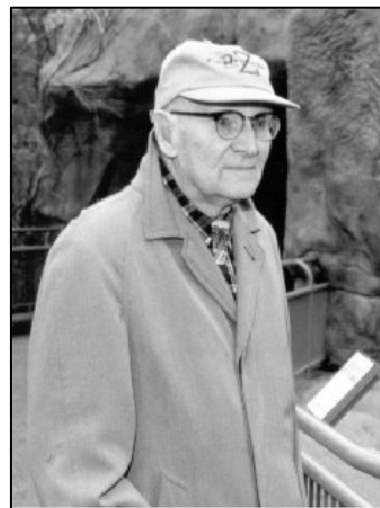
By Dave Wolverton

The Monmouth chapter of NESA is developing a "wall of honor" to honor all Eagle Scouts at the new council service center. The NESA committee has been busy compiling a list of all local Eagle Scouts, using records from the national office as well as local records. Of course, the question of who was the *first* Eagle Scout in the council soon arose.

A common problem in databases or genealogical records is "bad data." The earliest Scout in the council's Eagle Scout database was not even in a Monmouth county troop – he probably landed in the database after moving here and registering with a troop subsequent to earning the Eagle rank. The second name is probably recorded with the wrong year. The third name in the database turns out to actually be the first Eagle Scout in Monmouth Council.

His name is Roger Conant, and he was a member of Troop 17 in Red Bank. He earned the Eagle rank on March 27, 1924. The badge was presented to him in a special investiture ceremony during a council-wide "rally" at the Red Bank Armory. He received an Eagle Scout scholarship from the Harmon Foundation, which was the first nationally awarded Eagle scholarship.

What impresses one about Roger Conant's life is what he was able to achieve from modest beginnings with hard work. His father died when he was 12, so he grew up in a single-parent household with some help from an extended family. He took odd jobs to earn spending money. He was a counselor at Camp Burton. He developed a traveling reptile show, which led to a job at the Twin Brook Zoo in



Middletown, NJ. He attended the University of Pennsylvania but was unable to complete his studies due to lack of funds (this was during the Depression). At the age of 19 he was hired to manage the reptile exhibits at the Toledo Zoo. He worked in a number of zoo positions where he was noted for bringing scientific rigor to the profession. Simultaneously, he was frequently “in the field” around the world doing research, and has well over 200 publications to his name. He eventually became the Director of the Philadelphia Zoo. After retiring from the Philadelphia Zoo, he was a professor at the University of NM.

Seven species of animals are named for Mr. Conant. He co-wrote Peterson’s *Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America*. He was the President of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists. He received an honorary Doctorate from the University of Colorado and received the R. Marlin Perkins award from the American Zoo and Aquarium Association.

Of special interest to Scouts, Mr. Conant wrote the *Reptile Study* merit badge pamphlet (4 editions from 1944 to 1976). And the BSA honored him with a Gold Medal for Natural Resource Conservation – the highest-level William T. Hornaday Award – in 1999.

Mr. Conant died in his sleep on December 14, 2003 at the age of 94.

Photo courtesy of the AZA, www.aza.org

Inventorying Beginning with New PC Software

With the assistance of several kind donors, we have acquired a PC and a specialized museum database application called *PastPerfect* (see more about it at www.museumsoftware.com). This database is the same one used by the **National Scouting Museum** to track their collection.

The museum volunteers are now learning how to use the software and beginning to log the donated memorabilia into the system. It will take several months to catch up with the backlog of donations, but in the end it will be well worth the effort because we will have a great tool for researchers to easily find items in our collection.

Each and every artifact is assigned a unique ID number, similar to a Social Security number, which identifies the year the item was donated, the donor, and the specific item within a group donated items.

Hittin’ the Streets

Suanhacky Lodge #49 Order of the Arrow celebrated its 75th anniversary with a banquet in January. A highlight was a display of lodge memorabilia assembled by the TMR Museum. Several boards of photographs supplied by NJSM were a big part of the display.

In June, Steve Buckley and Dave Wolverton brought a display to the annual “Trade Show of Scouting” held in Whippany, NJ by Patriot’s Path council.

Dave Wolverton gave a talk on the council’s first Eagle Scout at the Monmouth council’s NESA (National Eagle Scout Association) committee kickoff for the Eagle Scout wall of honor to be installed at the new service center. See the article elsewhere in this issue for more details on this outstanding Eagle Scout.

Kudos to the Ten Mile River Museum

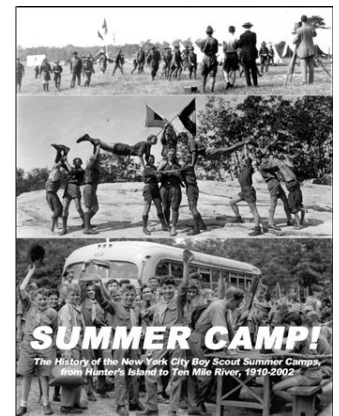
The nice folks over at the Ten Mile River Museum in New York have been helping us “behind the scenes” here at the NJSM with ideas and information. They have a great museum and a great web site with tons of information about the history of TMR and other Greater New York Councils’ camps. You can peruse their web site at

www.tmrmuseum.org

They also have an extensive online collection of digitized photographs and documents at

www.tmrarchive.org

Another facet of their work has been the publication of several books. Of particular interest to New Jersey scout historians is **Summer Camp! The History of New York City Boy Scout Summer Camps, from Hunter’s Island to Ten Mile River, 1910-2002**, which includes a large amount of previously unpublished research on the Kanohwahke Lakes scout camps. These camps were the summer camps of several New Jersey councils in the 1910s and 1920s. **Summer Camp!** is available from the TMR Museum web site.



Recent Memorabilia Donations

Ken Bonnell – signal flags

Estate of Mabel Brockel – large collection of historical documents relating to Monmouth council including the opening of Forestburg, and other memorabilia

Michael De Bisshop – patches

Elizabeth and Herbert Henderson – items from the estate of Amos Henderson

Marilyn Jost – personal collection of Scout Dan Jost

George Kaiser – FSR burro packsaddles, kerosene lantern, pack frame, old FSR Trading Post signs

Matawan Historical Society – 1953 Jamboree scrapbook and ephemera from James Flynn, Post 73 flag, T. 73 set of charters

John Malcolm – books, walking sticks, Chet Fromm patch blanket

Jim Mechkowski – plaque from DAR flagpole at Camp Housman

Ward Miles – large collection of personal memorabilia

Ward Miles/Jim Milton – items from estate of Walt Litowinsky

Monmouth County Historical Assoc. – merit badge book

Jeff Phelon – photo of Rick Fink w/ T.49 flag in Iraq Northeast Region – patch display wall hanging, 1950 Jamboree ephemera and neckerchief

Pack 49 (Garrison at Fort Monmouth) – Cub Scout game, framed patches, framed advancement charts, misc. scout pamphlets

Richard Raymond – 2 uniforms, books

Don Schaffner – 5 neckerchiefs

Bob Shotwell – Explorer uniforms, books, mugs

Stacey Slowinski – ca.1970 Quail Hill Cub Camp pennant

Charles Smith – Watchung council FOS plaque

Frank C. Smith – 1976 Battleground camporee patch

Jodi Stark – items from the Bermuda scouts at FSR
Matt Thornton – patches

Ed Weickel – items from the estate of George Engeldrum

Rona Weinberg – collection of Murray Wolfson

Wayne White – collection of 1930s MCBSA papers and photos from the estate of the council's secretary

Dave Wolverton – large collection of Boys' Life and Scouting magazines

Joan Wyman – Den Mother uniform, Pack 141 flag

Anonymous donor – 1938 Monmouth council annual report

Thank You, John

A big THANK YOU to John Malcolm for performing some difficult restoration work on Chet Fromm's pup tent that we hope to have on display in the near future.

2004 Friends of the Museum

The following people joined in 2004 after our last issue went to press. THANK YOU!

Founding Patron

Charles Spitz

Founding Century

Frank & Marg Wolverton

Founding Friend

Pierce Capell

Drew Karlen

2005 Friends of the Museum

The "Friends of the Museum" program is our way to encourage members of the public to provide financial support for the museum. There are currently 3 levels: Patron (\$250), Century (\$100), and Friend (\$20). The benefits for each level are listed on the form available at the museum or from our web site,

www.NJScoutMuseum.org. We appreciate the support of the following people.

Patron

Rheinhardt Hassler

Century

Randy Holden

Friend

John Bruns

Kurt Kalafsky

David Crow

Patricia Kurz

Jeff Goldsmith

Dr. Vincent Palmisano

The Friends of the Museum is our primary means for funding the improvements in the museum. The participation is down this year. Please consider making a donation before the end of the year!

NJSM Financial Report

As of October 3, the (unaudited) year-to-date financial position of the museum is:

- Income from Friends of the Museum and other donations: \$1,552
- Expenses: \$1,420

We anticipate additional expenses this year of roughly \$1,000 for a security system, software, and exhibit area improvements.

Memorabilia Donations Wanted

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will see that the donations are still coming in for the museum. We thank all those who have made contributions. If you have anything to donate, contact curator Dave Wolverton at 732-758-6470.

Equipment and Services Donors

We appreciate the assistance of these companies and individuals who have recently made in-kind contributions.

Ed Carroll, Steven Buckley, David Crow, Dave Wolverton – PastPerfect software

David Crow – PC upgrades

Frank Sanchez – vacuum cleaner

Jan Wouters – legal services

How to Contact the Museum

Currently we do not have a dedicated phone line, so to get in touch with us, please call curator Dave Wolverton at 732-758-6470.

Operating Hours

The museum is currently open Wednesday evenings from 6:00 to 8:00 pm except holidays. If we can get more volunteers, we would like to expand our hours — perhaps to be open on weekends.

New Jersey Scout Museum, Inc.
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